



ENSSER e.V. * Marienstr. 19/20 * 10117 Berlin * Germany

ENSSER Press Release

P +49 (0) 30 / 12084549
E office@ensser.org
W <http://www.ensser.org>

Berlin, 19.10.2023

New GM plants: EU Commission has lost science and safety from sight

The European Commission's proposal to exempt most 'new' genetically modified (GM) plants from regulation lacks scientific basis, scientists of the European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER) point out. The proposal will expose citizens and the environment to potentially unsafe food, feed and plants without informing the citizens. It amounts to a shameful attack on the Precautionary Principle (PP). New GM plants must remain regulated by the existing EU legislation, which has proven to serve its purpose well.

The proposal of the European Commission to exempt most new GM plants from the EU GMO legislation is strikingly ill-founded, according to experts from ENSSER. The Commission claims that its proposal is based on science, but the core of the proposal are criteria concerning the number and type of genetic modifications allowed and the length of DNA sequences involved. There is no scientific basis to suggest that new GM plants meeting these criteria are biologically equivalent to conventional plants and should therefore be exempted from regulation, as the Commission proposes. These criteria are unscientific, arbitrary and no more than a political classification.

Worse, however, is that such exemption will abolish the risk assessment, labelling and traceability of almost all new GM plants. They can be grown freely and their products marketed without consumers knowing what they eat and being able to choose. These plants and their products have no history of safe use. Toxins and other risk factors may arise and it will be impossible to trace these to the GM plants, since the food products will not be labelled, there will be no register of these plants and no detection methods for their traceability and monitoring will be required. The lack of transparency and traceability will prevent independent scientists from identifying risks and following up with research.

Account: ENSSER e.V. / GLS Bank / IBAN: DE21 4306 0967 4030 7947 00 / SWIFT-BIC: GENODEM1GLS KtoNr: 4030 794 700 /

BLZ 430 609 67

Legal Status: ENSSER e.V. is a non-profit association under German law

Registration at: Amtsgericht Braunschweig / Registration Number: 200636 / Date of Registration: 03. 12. 2009

StNr. 13/220/61316

This deregulation of most new GM plants based on political criteria and without any regard for their risks, is a blatant attack on the Precautionary Principle (PP). The PP, laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, obliges the Commission to take measures for avoiding harm if the available scientific information indicates possible harm while scientific certainty is lacking. If this arises with the new GM plants, it will go undetected with no liability on the part of the developers. To prevent this, the existing EU legislation, which has proven to serve its purpose well, must be maintained. The EC proposal must therefore be abandoned.

"Regulation not only allows to identify and trace potential risks, is also helps to assign responsibility and liability. With the new proposal for abolishing regulation for over 90% of GMOs currently under development in the private and public sector, the EU Commission solely sides with vested interest industries and their aligned research circles, fully transferring risks and potential harm to all European citizens, while allowing for centralized profiteering through the patenting regimes intimately connected to these genetic engineering technologies", Dr. Angelika Hilbeck, board member of ENSSER, says.

Contact:

Diederick Sprangers: dsprangers@ensser.org
+31 24 324 9211